

SPEECH

ENG/GREEK
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ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL PASTORAL VI

HIS BEATITUDE, THE POPE AND PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALL AFRICA,

PETROS VII - BANQUET HELD IN HIS HONOUR ON 28 OCTOBER 1997

Your Beatitude, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa,
Petros VII, Your Excellency - Mr Ambassador for Greece,
Mrs Theophanopoulos, Your Grace, Paul Lyngris - Archbishop of
Johannesburg and Pretoria, our Deputy Mayoress of the Alberton
Town Council - Councillor Haipel. *Thavoryjoun (deafestria)*

I now come to our Special, Honoured Guests - in the first instance,
from Greece and Egypt:

- a. Your Excellency, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis - Secretary General for Hellenes Abroad.
- b. Mr Stephanos Tamvakis - Regional President of SAE, Asia-Africa.
- c. Other Office Bearers from the Greek Government:
 - (i) Mrs Rengina Vartzeli - Head of the Department for Hellenes Abroad.
 - (ii) Mrs Maria Dimopoulou - Head of the Department for Cultural Affairs.
 - (iii) Mrs Lora Hatzimitrou - Member of the General Secretary's Cabinet.

A Hearty welcome and appreciation for attendance by the Ambassadors of:

- a. Lebanon - His Excellency, Mr C Stephan
- b. Russian Federation - His Excellency, Mr V Lukov and Mrs Lukov
- c. Poland - His Excellency, Mr MC Cieniuch
- d. Bulgaria - His Excellency, Mr PN Draganov and Mrs DN Mantcheva
- e. The Minister of Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of Egypt - His Excellency Mr Aly El-Hesny and Mrs Hebatullah El-Din
- f. The Charge D'Affaires of the Embassy of Yugoslavia - Her Excellency, Ms O Dzuver
- g. The Charge D'Affaires of the Embassy of Romania - His Excellency, Mr D Neagu and Mrs D Neagu

Heads of various Church Faiths and Denominations in the Republic of South Africa:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| a. | Bishop Dandala & Mrs Dandala | - Methodist |
| b. | Chief Rabbi Harris & Mrs Harris | - Jewish |
| c. | Father Johannes | - Coptic |
| d. | Father Shrobonja | - Serb |
| e. | His Excellency, Archbishop De Paoli | - Apostolic |

Our Consul General for Cyprus - Mr Toumazis, Mrs Toumazis,
Consul General for Greece - Mr Dafaranos, Mrs Dafaranos.

The Consuls from:

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------|
| a. | Cape Town | - Mr Aravositas |
| b. | Durban | - Mr Tsiepas |

OTHER HONOURED GUESTS —
LADIES & GENTLEMEN

On behalf of the Federation of Hellenic Communities of South Africa, I thank you most sincerely for being present here this evening and sharing this momentous occasion with us.

We are indeed privileged and honoured to have with us this evening, our Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa, Petros VII and record this as an historical occasion, not only for Christian Orthodoxy, but for the South African Nation as a whole - in that our Orthodox Head of South Africa is paying us this visit and is seeking to co-operate and promote Christianity, welfare, well-being and happiness for humanity in South Africa and elsewhere.

We have no doubt that through the medium and the leadership of our Patriarch, the co-operation of Church Leaders of other Denominations and Faiths will go a long way in assisting in the answer to our Prayers for peace and happiness in South Africa and throughout the world.

The turmoil and tribulations that Society faces to-day, can only be overcome by our Faith in Our Lord. It is only by joining hands that we will be able to create a better Society in South Africa and strive towards eradicating the evils that befall us, not only in our beloved Country South Africa, but throughout the world.

Είναι η πρώτη φορά που οι Έλληνες της Νοτιου Αφρικης και η Ορθοδοξια στην Νοτια Αφρικη εχουν ενα ηγέτη της Εκκλησιας ο οποίος εχει υπηρετήσει ήδη για αρκετους χρονους ως Αρχιμανδριτης στην Νοτια Αφρικη, πριν γίνει ο Πατριάρχης μας. Αναμφίβολα θα είναι μεγαλο πλεονέκτημα για τους Ορθοδοξους Έλληνες της Νοτιου Αφρικης να εχουν καποιον που εχει ζήσει μαζί τους και που καταλαβαινει τον τροπο ζωης τους και γνωρίζει τις Νοτιο Αφρικανικες Κουλτουρες

Μακαριωτατε, σας ευχαριστούμε που αναλάβατε ενα τόσο δυσκολο και γεματο προγραμμα, για να μπόρεσετε να επισκεφτείτε ολοκληρο το ποίμνιο σας. Είμαστε εδώ, για να μας καθοδηγήσετε και για να σας βοηθήσουμε, οπου μπορούμε.

Εμεις οι Έλληνες της Νοτιου Αφρικης, που αποτελουμε το μεγαλυτερο αριθμο των Πιστων της Ελληνικης Ορθοδοξης πιστης στην Αφρικη, ειμαστε εδώ να κανουμε οτι μπορούμε για να σας βοηθήσουμε να προωθήσετε και να φερετε την αποστολή σας προς μια καρποφορη πραγματικοτητα.

Προσευχομαστε να σας δινει ο Θεος ευημερία και υγεια για να μας καθοδηγείτε Πνευματικα ωστε να μπορεσουμε ολοι να πετυχουμε τους στόχους μας.

Δεν ξεχνουμε ποτε και ουτε παυουμε να εκτιμούμε το γεγονός οτι αρχηγος της τοπικη μας Εκκλησιας είναι η Σεβασμιωτητα του, ο Αρχιεπισκοπος Παυλος Λυγκρης που μας καθοδηγεί Πνευματικα και βοηθαι τον Ελληνισμο ολοκληρο. Ευχαριστουμε την Ωραιότητα σας.

Our visiting Ambassadors and Leaders of other Faiths and Denominations, thank-you for joining us this evening. Thank-you for being with us to honour our Orthodox Leader, His Beatitude Petros VII and our other Special Guests, His Excellency, Mr Stavros Lambrinides - Secretary General for the Hellenes Abroad and Mr Stephanos Tamvakis, Regional President of SAE Asia-Africa.

Your co-operation with our Church Leader, as well as with our Political Leaders, goes a long way in creating a better understanding between the South African Hellenes and members of your Communities and Faiths.

The Hellenic Community of South Africa, has never portrayed itself as one found on an isolated island not concerning itself with the affairs of its fellow South Africans.

The fact that you are all here this evening, our visiting Ambassadors, our Representatives of the various Faiths and other Christian Denominations, depicts that the Hellenic Community forms an integral part of the broader South African Society and is not isolated.

Your Excellency, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis - Secretary General for Hellenes Abroad, who came at short notice to be with us and to share his views at our local SAE Congress. We are indeed grateful and thank-you for being with us this evening. We have no doubt that from now on, there will be contact at a different level, between the Federation, yourself and your Department.

Mr Stephanos Tamvakis - Regional President of SAE Asia-Africa. We know that one of your duties is to visit all the members and we are indeed thankful that you chose this period to be with us to have local discussions and to enable us to arrange for the local SAE Congress.

We thank you for devoting your personal time and effort to the SAE movement and for giving your unstinting attention and support to the problems and difficulties that the South African Hellenes are facing.

Για τους Έλληνες της Νοτιου Αφρικης, η ταυτόχρονη επισκεψη της Αυτου Θεοτάτης Μακαριοτητάς, του Πέτρου του 7ου, και αυτη των κυριων Σταβρου Λαμπρινιδη και Στεφανου Ταμβακη, εχει συμβαλει στην σπουδαιοτητα και την εκτιμηση οτι, οι Υπεράτλαντικοί μας Αρχηγοι δεν μας εχουν απομονώσει, αλλα ενδιαφερονται για την εημερια, τις υποθέσεις και την ανάπτυξη των γενικων καταστασεων στην Ντια Αφρικη, οποτε μπορούν.

Ξέρουμε ότι η προώθηση των Αποδημών Ελλήνων και η ευημερία τους, υποστηρίζεται πολύ από την Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση και αυτό εξηγεί την παρουσία σας, εδώ, σήμερα. Τα όραμάτα σας και οι γνώσεις σας που φανήκαν στην τοπική μας ημερίδα, με θεματά ΣΑΕ, ήταν πολύ ωφέλημα.

Υποστηρίζουμε ανεπιφυλακτά το τμήμα σας και τις προσπάθειες Ελληνικής Κυβερνήσεως ώστε να επιτευχθούν όλοι οι σκοποί, οι οποίοι έχουν τεθεί για την ευημερία των Νοτίω Αφρικανών Ελλήνων μαζί με την ευγενική συνεργασία και βοήθεια του Πρεσβυ της Ελλάδος, κυρίου Θεοφανοπούλου.

Οι προτιμούμε να γίνει,

Το ΣΑΕ θα γίνει η ναυαρχίδα των Αποδημών Ελλήνων, σε ένα πολύ μικρό διαστήμα.

Mr Ambassador, to you, words fail in expressing the Federation's sincerest gratitude for your attitude, assistance and willingness to be with us and share whatever difficulties we may be facing from time to time. we have witnessed that many times you go beyond your duties as Ambassador, to be of assistance. We are truly appreciative of your efforts and participation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Banquets of this nature, visits by people such as His Holiness and all our important guests, both local and overseas, does not just happen. Congresses take a lot of time and effort to organise. I would be failing if I did not express my sincerest gratitude to Mr Manikas, together with his Sub-Committee, Msrs Panayiotou and Stathakis and the Chairman of our Church Committee - Mr Steve Boyazoglu, who have assisted in organising our Patriarch's visit and this evening's Banquet.

Gratitude is also expressed to Mr Avvakoumides, Mr Magdalinos, Mr Hadziefstratiou and all other local members of our SAE Sub-Committee, for their hard work and thus making the visit of Mr Lambrinidis and Mr Tamvakis worth their while. Ms Maria-Anna Deroukakis our secretary and Chairlady of NAHSOSA - thank-you for handling both offices so efficiently.

Sincerest thanks also goes to EPNEK for the hard work that they have put into this evening and to the Hellenic Community of Alberton for all their assistance.

Without you all and the Federation's Executive, none of these activities and functions would have been possible. My sincerest thanks to you all.

I again thank one and all, our kind guests from the other Faiths and Church Denominations, Foreign Ambassadors - all of you for joining us this evening and for enabling us to record a momentous and historical occasion.

May we all reap the benefits of what our Leaders, Spiritual, Cultural and Political are endeavouring to do for us, irrespective of Faith, Creed, Race or Colour.

ΟΑΣ Ευχαριστο ων ωραυ βερλενατε μαζε μς να τιμωουμε
ΕΙΔΕΙΤΕΡΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΤΑΤΟ.
Thank you.

27 October 1997
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